

MAURICE RIVER TOWNSHIP
Special Meeting
Shore Protection & Maurice River Dredging
Thursday, February 25, 2016 – 2:00 P.M.

This meeting has been advertised in accordance with the statutes of the State of New Jersey.

Call to Order

Presentations

1. NJ Futures and Sustainable Jersey telephone conference regarding
Proposed projects of shore protection at Matts Landing and dredging of the Maurice River.

ADJOURNMENT

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Special Meeting
Thursday, February 25, 2016 – 2:00 P.M.

This meeting has been advertised in accordance with the statutes of the State of New Jersey.

Present: Mrs. Gross
Mr. Oliver
Nick Graviano
Kenneth Whildin
Ben Stowman
Denise L. Peterson

Purpose of the meeting is a telephone conference with David Kutner of NJ Futures and Emma of Sustainable Jersey to obtain information projects of shore protection and dredging of the Maurice River.

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Gross at 2:00 P.M. and attendance was noted.

Presentations

Mr. Kutner explained that a conference with the US Army Corps of Engineers had recently taken place and discussion of shore protection and dredging of the Maurice River were included.

The Army Corps of Engineers will be conducting more research regarding projects to take place in Commercial Township and Maurice River Township. A Federal Interest Determination which weighs the cost and benefits to move the projects forward. The reports of the findings have been submitted to the North Atlantic Division.

The Maurice River project includes an alternative and is a hybrid approach of flood reduction and mitigation. The project includes the area south of Matts Landing Road and would include a "breakwater" to reduce the water intrusion to developed area of the township (Heislerville). Mr. Stowman clarified that this area is otherwise known as the northwest reach near the barges at the mouth of the river. Emma explained that the breakwater would be the structural component with fill placed behind it and then vegetation would be planted for reinforcement.

The application was submitted in December 2015 and the review takes up to 60 days for completion. It is anticipated that a reply should be received any day.

Commercial Township is being evaluated for bulkhead and levee replacement by Army Corps of Engineers.

The project CAP number for Maurice River Township is 103- Beach Erosion while Commercial Township is 205-Flooding. The areas under consideration in Commercial Township are Bivalve, Peak of the Moon, and the shell pile reach.

The next step of the process is the feasibility study. Mr. Stowman questioned if a cost estimate had been established yet. Emma replied that no cost estimate had been done yet. The whole project (Maurice River and Commercial Township) is estimated at between 5 to 10 million, which is within the range to move forward should there be enough benefits.

The next step for Maurice River Township and Commercial Township in this process is to get a co-sponsor – Coastal Engineering. Coastal Engineering needs to be on board in order to get these projects to move forward as well as legislators: Congressman LoBiondo, Senator Van Drew, and Assemblymen Andrzejczak and Land. Mr. Kutner

emphasized that the township must voice their approval and pursue this endeavor on their own. Mr. Graviano asked for a draft letter sample to be supplied to the township which would include all pertinent information pertaining to the project which can be reviewed and sent by the Township Committee. Mrs. Gross stated that she would like to see this project move forward and will make it a priority. Mr. Kutner emphasized that the NJDEP will need to move on this to make it happen.

Mrs. Gross questioned if local businesses support would be beneficial to having the project move forward. Mr. Kutner believes all supporters; businesses, local government, legislators would be beneficial. He stated that the Army Corps really wants to get started on these projects but everyone needs to be on the same page.

Mr. Graviano stated that dredging of the river by the township may be the fastest and cheapest way to go. Funding opportunities in most cases will require cost sharing and this may be the same cost that the township would expend by simply paying for the cost themselves. The shore protection and dredging are two separate projects but should be pursued at the same time.

Mr. Stowman asked if the material from the dredging could be used as the fill for the shore protection. Emma stated "maybe" as all dredged material must be tested for contaminants before use.

The next step of this so is a feasibility study and make Coastal Engineers aware and obtain their support; additionally the FID is available for this area. The feasibility study will take 2 to 3 years to complete. Mr. Oliver asked what can be done now. Mr. Graviano stated that remedial temporary measures and working with the NJDEP. Mr. Stowman questioned the installation of breakwater. Emma stated that "no" as that is water and would involve the Army Corps.

Mr. Stowman stated that the dike is wearing quickly and needs attention; temporary measures to reinforce the dike are essential.

It was discussed that the dike area is listed in the township's FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan and funding may be available. Mr. Stowman stated the main problem is that the dike area is Fish & Wildlife (NJDEP) property. Emma will check into this situation. Mr. Graviano suggested obtaining Public Assistance funding for the temporary work. Additionally funding resources discussed were PBA grant and FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant.

Discussion regarding the dredging of the Maurice River took place. It was stated that there may be Army Corps funds available for the survey of the channel but not for the actual dredging. It was stated that the Maurice River is designated as a "shallow drift river" which means it is not deep flowing; re-designation as a deeper channel would be difficult to obtain.

Emma stated that at a meeting in December with planning representatives it was discussed to dredge the channel with indication that the designation of the river was early enough but not in the historic meander. Navigation funds are limited and very hard to obtain through the Army Corps.

It was stated that the township could pursue the dredging of the river on its own but would need to go through the process. It was discussed that dredged material could potentially be sent to the Cape May Ferry location (disposal site).

Mr. Oliver stated that the two local shipyards would be able to undertake work on Coast Guard Cutters if the river were dredged to a deeper depth – would this help in the re-designation. Mr. Kutner stated that it would be very difficult to have the river re-designated.

Emma stated that there are two contaminants in the Maurice River: fish tissue PCB's and arsenic. Samples of the Maurice River sediment are already out there. The contaminants

have been located from Leesburg to the Matts Landing (south) area. These contaminants would eliminate the material for reuse.

Mr. Oliver questioned the existence of bald eagle nests along the river and the presence of these contaminants. Emma stated nesting sites may be present but it does not mean the eagles hunt there. The contaminants were found in live fish samplings and have been present for six years in a row. The 303D list report can be pulled from the NJDEP website.

It was discussed that the Delaware Estuary Regional Sediment Plan is looking at these issues for the program and beneficial reuse: maybe a source of funding for maintenance dredging.

TO DO LIST:

1. Township request for letters of support
2. Emma to obtain the Army Corps draft of the plan
3. Review of the report due by early March
4. RFP for dredging – Nick
5. Emma will supply surveys
6. Patti is meeting with Sari for a site visit - Partnership for Delaware Estuary

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 P.M.

Denise L. Peterson, Municipal Clerk